

True Gain;
OPENED IN A
SERMON

PREACHED

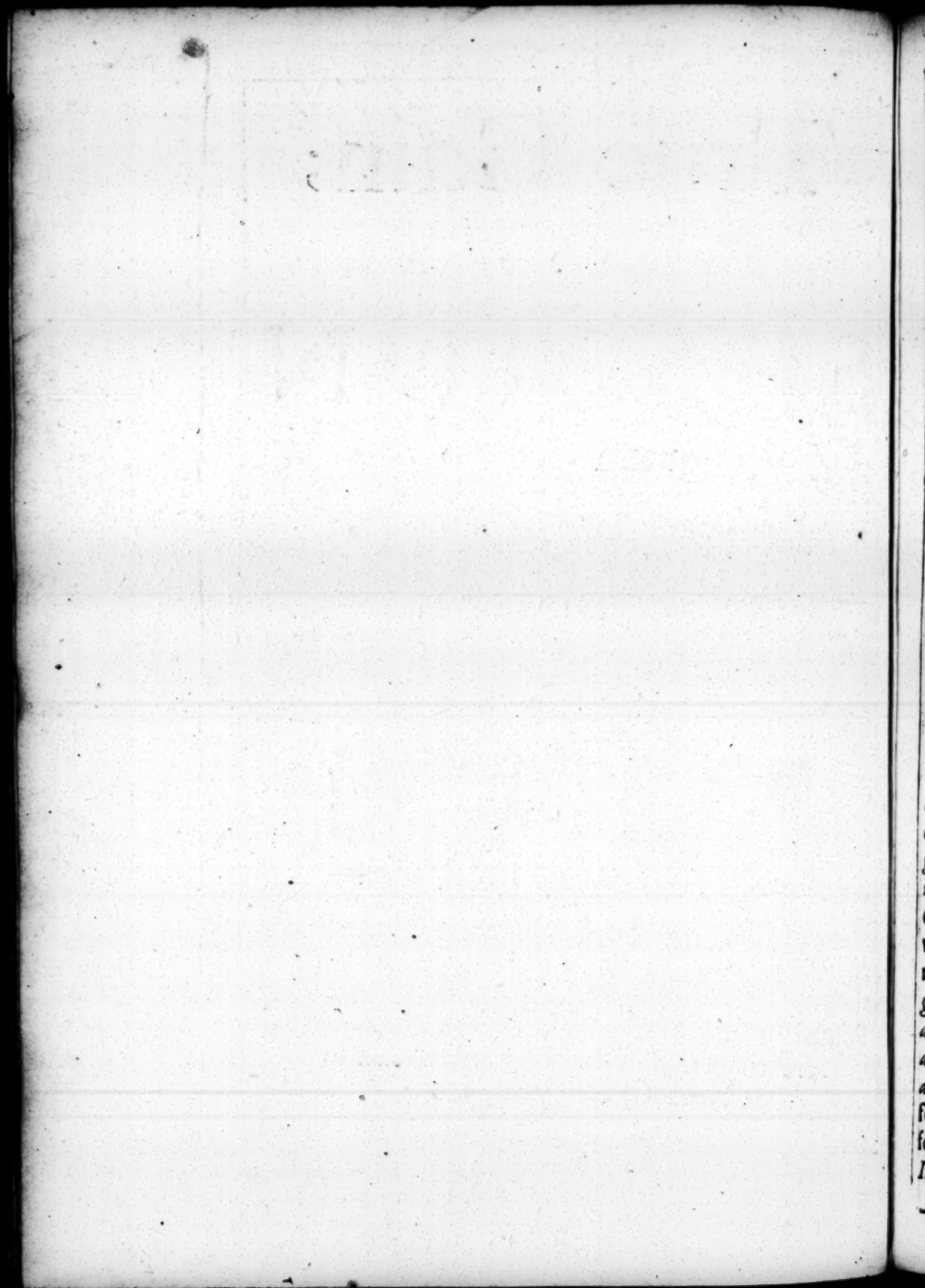
At Pauls, Nov. 9. 1656.

By EDWARD REYNOLDS D.D.



LONDON,

Printed by *Tho. Newcomb*, for *George Thomason*, and
are to be sold at the *Rose and Crown* in
S. Pauls Church-yard, 1657.





To the Right Honourable
Robert Tichborn,
Lord Major of the City of
London, and the Honourable
Court of Aldermen.

Right Honourable,

Being invited to preach before you, and the Chief Assembly of this great City, I thought it would not be an unseasonable Argument, to incourage Citizens, (whose labours and imployments, have a special aspect unto Gain,) to look after the Works of God, and the interests of their precious Souls, upon the account of that (a) full, and (b) great, and (c) sure reward, which ever attendeth heavenly negotiations. We read in the Scripture of an (d) unabiding City, and a (e) City which hath foundations; of (f) winged riches, which flie away; and (g) of durable riches which stay by us: Of the Scheme, the Pageant, the (h) fashion of this world, which passeth over, and of a (i) massie, and eternal glory, which never fadeth away: Of comforts which we (k) leave behinde us, and put off when we lie down to sleep, and of a (l) Comforter which abideth with us, and (m) works which follow us, and are transportable into another Country. Inasmuch therefore as the Apostle telleth us, that we

A 2

are

a 2 Jöhn v. 8.
b Psal. 19. 11.
c Prov. 11. 18.
d Heb. 13. 14.
e Heb. 11. 10.
f Prov. 23. 5.
g Prov. 8. 18.
h 1 Cor. 7. 31.
i 2 Cor. 4. 17.
l Pet. 1. 4.
k Psal. 49. 17.
l Joh. 14. 16.
m Rev. 14. 13.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

n Eph. 2. 19.

, Phil. 3. 20.

p Ecclef. 1. 4

are (n) συμπολίται, fellow Citizens with the Saints, and that we have (o) πολιτεία, a traffique and negotiation in Heaven, and in as much as when we go from hence, the earth, and all the contents thereof, will (p) stay behinde us, and nothing will go along with the soul into another World, but those graces which did here enrich it: I have in this plain Sermon, endeavoured to perswade my self and mine hearers, to be wise Merchants for an abiding City, and above all the Interests in the World, to look after those two most precious Jewels, without which the possession of the whole World would be but specious beggery, our souls, and our Saviour. And because this is a Doctrine, most generally confessed, and yet too generally neglected: (even good men oftentimes suffering Martha's many things to divert their thoughts from Maries one necessary thing:) I have the more readily obeyed the Order of your Honourable Court, in publishing this Sermon: Though there be nothing but the wholesomeness of the Doctrine it self, to commend it to the view of this curious Age: Wherein, If mens fancies be not gratified with the dresse, and garnish, as well as their Consciences, nourished with the substance of sound Doctrine: If there be not either Elegancy of Stile, or New and Polite Notions, to commend old Truths to our more quaint and delicate palates, we are apter many times to censure the manner, then to value the matter which is set before us. As it is, I offer it to your favourable acceptance, and humbly commend you, and all your weighty affairs to the special blessing of the Lord,

Your Honours most humble servant

in the work of the Lord,

Edward Reynolds.



TRUE GAIN :

MATTH. 16. 26.

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?



Our Saviour acquainting his Disciples with what things he was to suffer at Jerusalem, and being thereupon rebuked by Peter, doth not only reprove Peter for the carnal apprehensions which he had of his Kingdome, assuring him that he was therein an *adversary* and an *offence* unto him, as going about to hinder the great work of mans Redemption, by dissuading him from those *sufferings* whereby it was to be accomplished; but doth further assure both him and all his Disciples, That they are to be so far from expecting earthly honours and preferments from him, as that they must learn to *deny themselves*, and in stead of *Crowns* and *Dignities*, must be ready to take up a *Crosse* as he should do, and to *follow him* without the camp, bearing his reproach. He assures
 B them

them that as all the good which he was to work for them, was to be *purchased* by his *sufferings*, and *denying of himself*, so the way whereby they were to be brought unto the *fruition* of it, was by *denying themselves*, and being conformable unto him in *sufferings*. That which was necessary for Christ to do by way of *merit* to *purchase* it, was necessary by way of *preparation* of heart for them to do, to *attain* unto it. As He, so we likewise are first to *suffer*, and then to be *glorified*; so Christ saith of himself, *Luke 24. 26.* and so the Apostle saith of his people, *Rom. 8. 17.*

And because they might be offended at this doctrine, as contrary to those opinions which they had entertain'd of their *Messiah* (whom they beleev'd him to be) who was in their apprehensions to *restore the Kingdome unto Israel*, *Acts 1. 6.* and to be *King of all the world* (whence there arose a general belief, not only amongst Jews, but others, as *Tacitus* observeth, that out of those Countries should arise a Prince who should rule over all the world, which the *Romanes* thought to have been verified in *Vespasian*, who was sometimes *Præfectus Judææ*, and afterwards Emperor of *Rome*) therefore our Saviour further sheweth them, that in these reasonings they had indeed *too low apprehensions*, of him and his Kingdome, for they ought to look upon their *Messiah*, as a Prince who would deliver them from the *greatest of all evils*, and advance them to a condition, beyond which a more blessed could not be found.

Pluvium persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens profectiq; Judea rerum potirentur.

Quæ ambages Vespasianum & Titum prædixerant, Annal. lib. 5.

found. But now admit that he were to be King of all the world, and would advance them proportionably to as great dignity as such a Kingdom could dispense; yet, if after all this, they die, and their souls perish and go to hell, what good would such a Kingdom, such a Messiah do them? Is there any thing worth the soul of a man which he would not expend, and part with to save that? Therefore he would not have them think that a *worldly domination* was such as he came to purchase for them; but a glorious and *eternal kingdome*, which at last he would *come with his Angels* to take them into, the first fruits and glimmerings whereof are more worth then all the crowns and diadems of the world, whereof he promised quickly after to give them a tast, which accordingly he did the eighth day following in his Transfiguration on the mount.

The Context from *vers. 24.* to the end of the Chapter containeth, 1. An *Affertion*. 2. A *Vindication* thereof. The *Affertion*, That whosoever will come after Christ must *take up his crosse, and deny himself*, v. 24. The *Vindication* from three great *scandals* which this severe doctrine of the Crosse was attended withall. 1. *Death*, and this taken away, v. 25. *Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it, and whosoever willose his life for my sake, shall finde it.* The way to attain *life eternal*, is to lay down a *mortal life*, when the glory of Christ and his service calleth us thereunto. 2. Another great *scandal* of the Cross is, that it strips us of the *world*, and the

comforts and delights thereof, this is removed, v. 26. Admit a man could not onely escape the *Cross* by forsaking Christ, but exchange him away for *all the world*, and make himself master of all the comforts which a confluence of all worldly dominions could pour into his bosome, yet if after all this he must die, and lose his soul, and that for ever without possibility of recovery, he would in the issue finde it but an unprofitable bargain.

3. The last scandal of the *Cross* is the *Ignominy*, and *shame* of it. In which respect Christ is said to have taken unto him the *form of a servant*, *Phil. 2. 7.* (because the death of the *Cross* was *servile supplicium*, as the Historian calleth it,) and to have despised the shame, *Hebr. 12. 2.* and this is removed, v. 27. *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shal reward every man according to his works.* As he, though he were put to shame on the *Crosse*, was yet after exalted unto glory, and sat down on a throne, *Hebr. 12. 2.* so with the same glory he will reward those that suffer shame for him, and their reward shall be according to their works, the measure of their glory answerable to the greatness of their shame and sufferings. Of which, having according to his promise v. 28. given a short, but most ravishing tast unto some of them in his transfiguration, they afterwards esteemed it a great honour, that they were accounted worthy to suffer shame for his Name, *Acts 5. 41.*

Liv. Tacit. vid. Casaub. ad Sueton. Aug. c. 67. & in Baron. Exercit. 16. c. 77. & Lips. de Cruce Appian. de Bell. Civ. l. 3. Sueton in Galba c. 9.

The words of the Text contain the removal of the

the second great scandal, which the Disciples might be apt to take at this doctrine of *self-denial*. They hoped, as it may seem, to be great men in the world, and to enjoy the liberties and honours thereof; and now they are told that they must *leave all* to follow Christ. And least they should be offended, he assures them that if they should do otherwise, and for love of the world should forsake him, 1. They would lose their souls, which are better to them then all the rest of the world: 2. Having lost them, they would finde nothing in all the world, able to redeem and recover them again.

The words are set down by way of *Interrogation*, intimating a more vehement Negation, *What shall it profit?* That is, It shall not at all profit. It carrieth a kinde of *universal concession*, and unquestionable truth in it, which no man can deny. Even they themselves who cast away their souls to gain the world, cannot, themselves being Judges, but confess, that it is an absurd thing to expect profit from any thing when the soul is lost, or to prefer all the world above a mans own eternal happiness. When a thing is exceeding manifest, the Scripture useth to make *men themselves*, whom it would thereby reprove, the judges of it. *Judge in your selves*, saith the Apostle, *is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered*, 1 Cor. 11. 13. and the Lord in the Prophet, *Isai. 5. 3, 4. O inhabitants of Judah, Judge I pray you, between me and my vineyard*. And elsewhere, *Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel*, saith the Lord,

Lord, Amos 2. 11. So the force of the *Interrogation* is such a deniall, as the heart of him to whom it is made must needs subscribe unto, as having nothing to alledge against it. And in a plain *Position* it is this, *That man who to gain the world, doth cast away his soul, shal finde no profit in such a gain*; it will prove like the gain which the Apostle speaks of, *Acts 27. 21.* a gaining of nothing but *losse*, and that an irreparable losse, which can never be recovered. It is dangerous venturing on such an Error, *in quo non licet bis peccare*, in which being once involved, a man can never get out again. Such is the *loss of a soul*, lose it once, and it is lost for ever, there can no ransome, no change be made for it $\psiυχῆς ἀντάξιον ὁδεῖ$, nothing can be put in the other scale to weigh with it: The Civil Law saies, *Ingenui hominis nulla est estimatio*. How much more truly may we say of the soul, *Immortalis anima nulla est estimatio*. No valuable consideration for a soul but the *blood of Christ*: If we forsake him to gain the *world*, we shall never finde any thing in the world precious enough by the exchange whereof to regain our *souls*.

The words have many particulars couched in them by way both of *Supposition*, and of *Position*. I shall reduce all unto this one Proposition; As Christ doth allow his servants to be moved by considerations of *gain* in his service, so he doth withall assure us, That this *gain* doth not stand in winning of the *world*, but in saving of the *soul*; That the *soul* being infinitely more precious then

Homer Iliad.
l. 10. Digest.
l. 9. tit. 1. leg. 3
de Reg juris
l. 106.

all the *world*, therefore the *gaining* of the world is nothing but *losse*, where the *loss* of the soul is the purchase of that *gain*; in as much as the *world* being gained, cannot be kept, and the *soul* being lost, can never be recovered. All men have a *merchandise* and trade to drive in this world, whereon doth depend the issue of their profit, or damage; therein their principal wisdom is to balance and poise their *gains* and *losses* so, as that they may thrive and prosper in this their trade; *worldly love* is a great obstruction unto the true *gain*, which a wise Christian should pursue. They who for preserving that, do take offence at the crosse of Christ, will suffer damage in their *souls*; the love of the *world*, and the love of the *soul* being inconsistent: Since therefore both will not stand together, and of the two, the *soul* is much more precious and excellent then the *world*, therefore a wise Christian should have his trade heavenward for the enriching of his *soul*, rather then downward for the possession of the *world*.

The branches then to be touched are three :
 1. The lawfulness of a Christians looking after true *gain*. 2. The inordinateness of *worldly love*, and inconsistency thereof with true Christian *gain*. 3. The preciousness of the *soul* of man, in saving, advancing, and enriching whereof, this true *gain* doth consist.

1. Then Christians may be moved in matters of Religion with arguments drawn *ab utili*, from considerations of *profit*, or *disprofit*, of such good things as are really beneficial and advantageous

*Nec quisquam
tantum a natu-
rali lege descen-
dit & hominem
exiit, ut animi
causâ malus sit.
Senec. de Be-
net. l. 4. c. 17.*

unto us. It is the voice of nature in every man, *who will shew us any good? Psal. 4. 6.* There is a naturall indigency in us, whereby we are constrained to look abroad for forraign supplies of that good, which we are wholly insufficient to furnish our selves withall. This wicked men look for in ways of sin; there are few men that are wicked gratis, but do promise themselves some benefit by their wickedness. If *Esau* sell his birthright; if *Balaam* curse Gods people; if *Ieroboam* set up *Calves*; if *Ahab* sell himself to work wickedness; If *Judas* betray his Master; it is all upon a contract and bargain, under the intuition of the wages of unrighteousness. *Si violandum jus regnandi causâ violandum.*

Therefore God is pleased, 1. To Dehort men from the *ways of sin* by undeceiving them, and discovering the unprofitableness and perniciousness of those ways. *My people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit, Jer. 2. 11.* Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? *Isai. 55. 2.* What fruit had ye then in those things whereof you are now ashamed? *Rom. 6. 21.* The voluptuous sinner promiseth himself abundance of delight in his *stollen waters*, let us take our fill of loves, let us solace our selves with loves, *Prov. 7. 18.* but at last when he hath destroyed his name, and gotten a mound, and dishonour, when he hath destroyed his estate, and strangers are filled with his wealth, when he hath destroyed his body, and given his years to the cruel, when he hath destroyed

destroyed his soul, and is gone down to the chambers of death: then tell me whether his perfumes of Myrrh, Aloes, and Cinnamon, be not all turned into gall and wormwood? The worldling promiseth himself much content in his dishonest gain, in fraud, oppression, circumvention, and violence; *Populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo ipse domi.* I shall have a brave vineyard, saies Ahab; I shall have sheep and oxen, saies Gehazi, I shall never want friends, nor contents, many answers to All, *O nummi vos estis fratres.* But what saies God? *Thou fool, this night shall they take thy soul from thee.* Thy vineyard, O Ahab, shall bring forth grapes of gall; Thy talents, O Gehazi, shall purchase thee and thine heirs a leprosie; Thy wedge of gold, O Achan, shall cleave thy soul from thy body; Thy thirty pieces of silver, O Judas, shall be the price of thine own bowels, as well as of thy masters blood. Treasures of wickedness shall not profit in the day of wrath, Prov. 10. 2. They that will be rich, drown themselves in destruction and perdition, and pierce themselves through with many sorrows, 1 Tim. 6 9, 10. The ambitious man promiseth himself much honour and power, when he hath arrived at that greatness whereunto he aspireth, *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God,* Isai. 14. 13. When I have by plausible compliances gotten the glories of the world, I will then please myself, as Nebuchadnezer did, with the view and fruition of so gallant a purchase. But what saith the Lord? *Though thou set thy nest amongst the stars,*
C thence

*Omnia serviliter
pro dominatione
Tacit. hist. 1.*

thence will I bring thee down, Obad. v. 4. Isai. 26. 5. Thou art a man and no God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God, Ezek. 28. 2. O Nebuchadnezzar, instead of the majesty of a Prince, thou shalt have the misery of a beast. Thy feasting, O Belshazzar, shall be turned into mourning, thy pride into terrors, thou shalt be drunk not with wine, but with astonishment, and thy joynts shall stagger against one another. Thus do men sell themselves to sin for hopes of gain, and thus miserably are they cheated in the bargain; the Devil dealing with them, as some say he doth with Witches, giving them leaves of trees in the shape of gold and silver, so that in the conclusion it appears, that they did indeed sell themselves for just nothing, Isai. 52. 3.

2. By the same argument God is pleased to vindicate the ways of godliness from the prejudice which wicked men have against them, as if they were unprofitable. What is the Almighty that we should serve him? what profit should we have, if we pray unto him, Job 21. 15. Ye have said, It is vain to serve God, what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances, Mal. 3. 14, 15. To take off this Objection, God assures his people, That his wayes do good to those that walk uprightly, Mic. 2. 7. That his people do not seek his face in vain, Isai. 45. 19. That he is not a wilderness unto them, Jer. 2. 31. That godliness is great gain, and profitable unto all things, 1 Tim. 4. 8. and 6. 6. That he who soweth righteousness, shall have a sure reward, Prov. 11. 18. That in keeping of his

Com-

Commandments, there is great reward, Psal. 119. 11. And he is pleased to animate his servants against the hardship of their Christian warfare, against externall difficulties, and internal faintings, by setting before them exceeding great and precious promises. Having these promises, let us cleanse our selves, and perfect holiness, 2 Cor. 7. 1. Ye have need of patience, that when ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promise, Heb. 10. 36 Be not weary of well-doing, in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not, Gal. 6. 9. When ye are reviled, and persecuted, rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward, Mat. 5. 11. By this consideration, not onely Moses and Paul, Heb. 11. 25, 26. Phil. 3. 14. but the Lord Jesus himself, for the joy which was set before him, endured the Cross, and despised the shame, Heb. 12. 2.

Now herein is the mercy of God greatly commended unto us, that when he might use no other argument to enforce obedience, then his *own* sovereign authority over us, is pleased to incourage us by our *own* benefit. The chief reason of obedience, saith *Tertullian*, is the authority of the Lord, not the utility of the servant. He made all things for himself, and might have looked no further then his own glory: we do so with the creatures which serve us, we labour our Oxen, and then we destroy them; first we make them drudge, and then we make them die. But God is pleased to encourage us unto duties by our *self-love*, commands us to fear him for our *own* good, Deut. 6. 24. sets the blessing of obedience, and the curse of

Prior est Autoritas imperantis quam utilitas servientis. Tertul.

disobedience before our eyes. *Dent. 11. 26, 28.* The work of Christianity is a difficult work, there are many *enemies*, many *temptations*, *Satan* and and the *world* resist us *without*, *corruption* wrestles and rebels *within*. But here is the comfort, Gods servants work for a Master that remembers all, who looks to their *profit*, as well as to his own *honour*, who keeps a *book* for our prayers, a *bottle* for our tears, a *register* for them that fear him, *Mal. 3. 16.* a *memorial* of but a cup of cold water, given to a Prophet as a Prophet. This is encouragement indeed unto Gods service: Christ is willing to put it to this issue. Though I have a *right* and *power* over you, which *Satan* hath not, I *made* you, I *bought* you, he never had title unto you, either by *dominion* or *purchase*, as I have; But I shall wish you to look to your own *interest*, see which service is most *advantagious* to your selves, mine or his: If he can make you more precious *promises*, if he can prefer you unto greater *happines*, if he have an immarcescible *crown*, an eternall kingdome to bestow upon you, if he have shed any *blood*, laid down any *life*, to purchase blessedness for you, I am willing where your *gain* is greatest, there your trade and service be directed. But if my *wages* be much better then his, and my *love* much greater then his, and my *right* in you, and *authority* over you much more then his, not onely for love and *duty* to me, but for your *own sakes*, limit and confine your *negotiations* there where your own *advantages* will be more abundant, and your *own*

comforts more durable and glorious.

We see Christ allows us to eye our own profit in his service. In what sense we may, or may not this do, may be briefly thus resolved.

1. We may not respect *profit* or advantage as the *ultimate end* of our obedience. Gods *glory* being simply the *supream* of Ends in it self, should accordingly be so unto us. Our greatest aim in bringing forth *fruit* should be, that God may be *honoured*, Joh. 15. 8. that whether *we live, we may live to him, or whether we die, we may die to him*, Rom. 14. 7, 8, 9. *All things are of him, and for him, therefore all things must be to him likewise*, Rom. 11. 36.

2. We must not respect *profit* and reward as the *only reason* of our obedience, without which we would not do God any service at all; for this would be a meer *mercenary* and *servile* consideration. The chief *reasons* of obedience are, our *subjection* to Gods authority over us, because he is the Lord; our *faith, love, and thankfulness* for his Covenant of grace, because he is *our God*. These two are joyned in the Preface to the Decalogue, *I am the Lord thy God*.

3. We may not respect *profit* and reward, as the fruit of any *merit* in our services: when we have done all we can, we are but *unprofitable servants* unto God, and therefore he might justly make our services unprofitable to our selves. It is matter of *comfort*, it is not matter of *boasting*; we may *rejoyce* that there is *profit* in serving of God, but we may not *glory* of it as any naturall or necessary

ἐκ οὗ πάντα ἐν
σοὶ πάντα, εἰς
σε πάντα.
Marc. Anto-
nin. l. 4 sect. 23

*Vita bona nostra
nihil aliud est,
quam Dei gra-
tia, & vita æ-
terna quæ bona
vitæ redditur,
Dei gratia est,
& ipsa gratis
datur, quia gra-
tis data est illi
cui datur &c.
Aug. de Grat.
& lib. Arb. c. 8*

cessary consequent of our services, for *Grace* doth exclude *boasting*, *Eph. 2.8.* and the *reward* is of *grace*, and *mercy*, not of *debt*, *Rom. 4. 4, 5.* and *11. 6.* *Psal. 62. 12.* *Exod. 20. 6.*

*But then we may look on the *reward* and *profit* of obedience. 1. As a *secondary end*, under the *glory* of God; so the Apostle calleth salvation the *end of our faith*, *1 Pet. 1. 9.* Our love to God though it be *above* our love to our selves, yet doth not exclude it: so our seeking of *Gods glory*, though it be *above* all other ends, yet it doth not exclude the seeking of our *own happiness*; yea God hath been pleased so graciously to *twist* and as it were, interweave and *concorporate* these together, that no man can truly aim at the *glory of God*, but he doth *eo ipso* promote his *own salvation*; neither doth any man sincerely seek his *own salvation*, but the Lord esteemeth himself therein *glorified* by him.

2. As a manifestation of *Gods bounty*, who when he might require homage of us as our Lord by the tie of our *natural subjection* unto him, is pleased out of free grace to propose further *rewards*, making our services as well matter of *profit* to our selves, as of *praise* and *glory* unto him; faith looketh upon God as a *rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, *Heb. 11. 6.* as a God that not onely is *good*, but doth *good*, *Psal. 119. 68.* as a God whose *power* and *mercy* is herein declared, in that he *rendreth unto every man according to his works*, *Psal. 62. 11, 12.*

3. As matter of *encouragement* to run with *pati-*

patience the race that is set before us; to animate us against all the difficulties, dangers, temptations, and variety of disheartnings, which through the subtlety and malice of Satan we are sure to meet with in Gods service. The *Hope* of ensuing glory doth work resolutions in Gods servants to *purifie themselves*, that so being like unto Christ in *holiness*, they may thereby be prepared to be like unto him in *glory*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 3. The *crown of righteousness* kept up the resolution of the Apostle himself, *to fight the good fight of faith, to run his race, to finish his course, to keep the faith*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. Thus a Christian is allowed by his Lord to do his masters work with some eye and intuition of his own gain.

But then as the Apostle saith, *If a man strive for masteries, he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully*; So, If a man contend for *gain* he shall never overtake it, except he contend *lawfully*. Our Saviour here hath *excluded one way*, and that a broad one, wherein multitudes weary themselves for this Prize, *What shall it profit a man if he win the whole world?* And secondly, intimateth the *true*, though a more *narrow* and private way, *viz.* to prosecute the interest of our precious souls. Let us consider them both.

First, Worldly love is inconsistent with true Christian *gain* upon many accompts. 1. It is *vast* and *insatiable*, like the horseleech which cries, *Give, give*; like fire, and the grave, which never saies it is enough, *Prov.* 30. 15, 16. Lust is *infinite*, there is no *end of its labour*, *Eccles.* 4. 8.

It

Provinciarum
nominibus agros
colit, sub singu-
lis villicis latio-
res habet fines
quam quos con-
sules sortiebantur.
Sen. de
ira. l. 1. c. ult.

Aristot. Seneca

Rusticus ex-
pectat dum de-
fluat annis, at
ille labitur, &
labetur.

It reacheth at *all*; therefore the Apostle calleth it not onely love of the *things* of the *world*, but love of the *world*; *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world*, 1 John 2. 15. A covetous heart grasps at the *whole* world, would fain be master of *all*, and dwell alone, like a *Wen* in the body, which draws all to it self; let it have never so much, it will still reach after more, *adds house to house, and field to field*, Isai. 5. 8. keeps not at home, cannot be satisfied, *inlargeth, gathereth, heapeth, increaseth, loadeth it self with thick clay*, Habac. 2. 5. 6. The very *Heathen* have complained of this endless, and unbounded reach of corrupt desires, ἀπληστος ἢ ὀρεξις, ἀπειρος ἢ ἐπιθυμία, *ex libidine orta sine termino sunt*. Lust hath no bound, no measure; like a *bladder* it swells wider and wider, the more of this empty world is put into it. Like a *breach of the sea*, which hath no internal bounds to contain it self in, *sternit agros, sternit sata leta boumq; labores*. The Countryman in the Fable would needs stay till the River was run all away, and then go over dry, but the River did run on still. Such are *inordinate* worldly desires, the deceitful heart promiseth to see them run over and gone, when they are attained unto such a measure; and then they are stronger and wider, more impotent and unruly then before, *modus & modus non habet modum*; for as *natural*, so *sinful* motions, the further they proceed, are usually the stronger. Now God having so ordered the world, as that no man can have it all to himself, it is *divided* and *bounded* to several men and nations,

nations, *Deut. 32. 8.* and man may not remove the *landmarks* which God hath set, nor affect a *Monopoly* where the Lord hath made a *community*; this *insatiable* desire of worldly gain can never be replenished, and so being *unattainable*, the labour which is spent about it must needs be *ungainful*, and disappoint the expectations which were built thereupon.

2. It is exceeding *disproportionable* to the *spiritual* and *immortal* condition of the heart of man; whatever is in the world is *material*, *carnal*, *mortal*. It can benefit the outward and the natural man: But to look for peace of Conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, inward and durable comfort, in any thing which the world affords, is to seek a *treasure* in a *colepit*. If you go to the *creature* to make you *happy*, the *earth* will tell you that *Blessedness* grows not in the *furrows* of the *field*; the *sea*, that it is not in the *treasures* of the *deep*; *castel* will say, it is not on our *backs*; *Crowns* will say, it is too precious a gem to be found with us, we can adorn the *head*, but we cannot satisfy the *heart*. *Solomon*, who made a critical inquiry after this point, gives this in as the *ultimate extraction* from the *creatures*; *vanity of vanities all is vanity*. We have all great experience how loose the *world* hangs about us. Life it self is a *bubble*, and is suddenly gone, but besides that finall separation, God hath a thousand ways to part us from this *darling*; fire burnes it, water drowns it, a sword cuts it off, sickness takes away the *savour* of it. A prodigall son, an unfaithfull servant, an

Plutarch.

περὶ τῆς ἀνδρείας.

ill debtor, a suit of law, a world of the like accidents may deprive us of it. Now no man will dote on a *false friend*, or care for a *false title*, or set his affection on any thing that is *false*. Why then should we love a *false world*? Or set our eyes on that which is not, as the Wiseman speaks, *Prov. 23.5*. Why should we with *Martha* so much trouble our selves about the *world*, and leave *Maries unum necessarium* wholly neglected? Like the man in *Plutarch* who went to the Physicians to cure a *sore finger*, when in the mean time his *lungs* were putrified, and he took no care of them.

3. It is exceeding *injurious* both to *God* and our selves. 1. To *God*, It sets up the world in his room, is *enmity against him*, *Jam. 4. 4*. is inconsistent with the *love of him*, 1 *Joh. 2. 15, 16* Estrangeth the soul wholly from him, steals away the love of the heart, and ingrosseth it unto it self. As the *shadow* of the earth makes *night* in the air, so doth the *love* of it, in the heart, when as *Solomon* speaks, the world is in it, *Eccles. 3. 11*. It goes along with a man, *sleeps* with him, *wakes* with him, goes to *meat*, goes to *Church* with him: When it *flows not in*. O how he carks and cares, murmurs and repines, whines and distrusts *God*? If it *abound*, how doth he hug and graspe it, and fill his soul with no other comfort? Talk of *spiritual things* faith, hope, love, repentance, new obedience, judgement to come, he is sick of such discourse, puts you off as *Felix* did *Paul* to another time; but speak of a *rich bargain*, of a *goodly*

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purchase, of a stately mannor, of a gallant prize, you lead him into a paradise, (such an one as it is) he saies with Peter, *It is good being here, let us build tabernacles.* It choaks the seed of the word in the soul, turns the house of God into a place of merchandise, yea it will cause men to erre from the faith, to know no godliness but gain, to take up religion as it is more or lesse in fashion, and advantageous; as the Samaritans would be Jewes when the Jews prospered, and when they were down, would help to persecute them. It will warp the Conscience, and corrupt the judgement and make Religion it self to serve turns, and to be subordinate to secular interests.

Joseph. Antiq.
l. 12. c. 3. & 7.

2. To a mans self, 1. It is *unnatural*, for nature hath set a *commensurateness* between objects and faculties. It is a miserable *degrading* of a reasonable soul to grope for happiness on the backs of sheep, on the furrows of the field, to fish for it in ponds, or to hunt for it in parks, or to trade for it in ships, or to think to bring it home on the bunches of Camels. It cost more to redeem a soul, and it must cost more to attain that redemption. Christ the heir of all things, who could have commanded the attendance of all the creatures in the world, was pleased to live in a low condition; that he might make it appear that eternal life hath not the least cognation or dependance on worldly wealth, either in his *procuring* it for us, or in our *deriving* it from him. What an unnatural and incongruous thing would it be for Angels to turn worldlings, and reasonable souls have the self-

same blessedness to look after as *Angels* have.

2. It is *unnecessary*, for had one man *all the world*, he could have no more out of it himself, then one *back*, and one *belly*, and the exigences of one person did require; whatever is more, he doth but behold with his eyes, Eccles. 5. 11. God is said to give us *all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6. 8, 17. He that hath sufficient to answer the necessity and decency of his estate, is therefore said to have *all*, because he hath as full a supply, as unto those purposes all the world could make him. A little which the righteous hath, is better then the riches of many wicked, Psal. 37. 16. Jacob was not so wealthy a man as Esau, yet Jacob said, I have *all*, Esau said, I have *much*. Jacobs little was *all*; Esaus more, was but *much*; Gen. 33. 9, 11.

3. It is a *disquieting* thing. Disquiets in the possessing. Riches are compared to thorns, Mai. 13. 22. a man cannot hug them, without being pierced by them, 1 Tim. 6. 10. Disquiets in the parting; there is sorrow and wrath in his sickness, Eccles. 5. 17. What a torment is it to flay off the skin of a man alive? Now the soul by inordinate love doth cleave closer to the world, then the skin to the flesh; and therefore is not torn from it without great pain. It is the saddest summons in the world to a rich fool, Thou hast heaped up for many years, but within a few houres the cold armes of death shall graspe thee, and carry thee to Gods tribunal. O what can riches or multitudes of riches do a man in that day of wrath?

wrath? If a Prince had a *stone* in his *bladder* too big to be removed, all the Jewels of his crown could not purchase him a recovery. What then can treasures avail against a *worm* gnawing in the *Conscience*?

I shall conclude this Point with these limitations:

1. We may use the world, and with diligent labour procure the things which we need, 1 Cor. 7.

2. We may employ our *heads*, as well as our *hands*, for labour without *wisdome* to guide it, is but a *weary idleness*.

3. We may receive the things of this world from God in Christ as fruits of his *gracious Covenant*, 1 Tim. 4. 8.

4. We may lay up and *provide* for our selves, and those that belong unto us, so far as the *necessities* of life, and *decency* of our particular state and condition do admit. Christ himself had a *bag* in his family, Joh. 13. 29. 1 Tim. 5. 8. But we may not *love*; nor set our hearts upon the world: *When riches increase, set not your heart upon them*. The world is for the *back* and the *belly*, but God onely is for the *heart*. Though we may eye our own *gain*; yet the *gain* of the world is not that *gain* which we are chiefly to eye. The *soul* being the most precious thing which a man hath, the saving, and enriching thereof, is the *only true Christian gain*.

First, Take the word $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ here for *life*, and even so the truth of the Text will hold; what gain is it

it to get the world, and to lose the life. *Is not the life more then meat, and the body then raiment?* Luke 12. 23.

1. All the *world* cannot hold or lengthen life beyond the *period* set it by God. *Our times are in his hand, Psal. 31. 15.* the efficacy of all second causes is suspended upon his *blessing*, man liveth not by bread alone, *but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, Matth. 4.4.*

2. Life is necessary to the enjoyment of the world, what good doth *light*, without an *eye* to see it? Or *musick*, without an *ear* to hear it? what good do *dainties*, without a *mouth* to taste them? Or *Crowns*, without an *Head* to wear them? Nay a man may have his life so clog'd with sickness, sorrow, discontent of minde, distress of conscience, that all the world shall not suffice to revive and comfort him.

3. When *life* is lost, the *world* is all lost with it, a *living porter*, is richer then a *dead Prince*; death translates properties. If a man purchase land to *himself* for ever, that ever is no longer then his *own life*, if he will have the purchase extend further, he must put in his *heirs* with himself.

Secondly, Take the word $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ for the *soul*, as Luke 12. 19, 20. and then the truth holds much more. For 1. If a man could keep his *soul* and and the *world* together, there is so vast a *dis-proportion* between them, that the one could never *replenish* the other. 2. If it could satisfy it for a time, yet it would cloy and *satiare* it at the last; there is *excesse* in worldly enjoyments, and all
excess

excess is nauseous and painful. 3. If they could replenish and not cloy, that there were a commensurateness between them, yet there is not an equality of *duration*. *One generation, saith Solomon, passeth away, and another cometh, but the earth abideth, Eccles. 1. 4.* If when a man goes away, the earth did go with him, haply the same content which he found in it here, he would find in it elsewhere, but when he goes and that stayes behinde him, all the content which he had in the *fruition*, doth vanish in the *separation*. 4. Being parted the *soul* must be *for ever*, as long as God is merciful to save, or just to punish, and what comfort is it, think we, *in hell*, for a man to remember the *pleasures* of a short life, of which nothing there remains but the *worm* and the *sting*? The Poet could say, *If the headach did come first, no man would be drunk.* If men could feel but a little of *hell*, before they sin, they would easily by that understand how empty and vanishing the pleasures of lust are, and how easily extinguished in a tormented Conscience, as a drop of wine loseth all its sweetness in a barrel of water. Again, what addition is it to the joyes of *heaven*, for a man to recount the comforts of a perishing world? What content takes a grave wealthy learned man, in remembring the joy which in his childhood he was wont to take in his top, and counters? 5. The nature of the soul is *spiritual*, and must have *spiritual objects* to converse about. *Sensitive* faculties may be delighted with *material objects*: Meer *natural reason* may gaze

Alexis apud
Athenam l. 10.

gaze with some content upon the beauty, order, contexture, concatenation of *natural causes* and effects. But the *supream spiritual* part of the soul is of a more high and noble extraction, then ultimately to delight it self in any thing but in God from whom it was breathed. It is capable of the *knowledge of God*, whom to know is perfect wisdom and eternal life. It is capable of the *image and grace of God*, of righteousness and true holiness to beautifie, and renew it: Capable of the *peace of God*, of the *joy of his salvation*, of the *earnest*, the *seed*, the *seal*, the *witnes* of his Spirit, of the *faine* of his *love* in Christ, which is *unspeakable and glorious*. Capable of that *fulnes of joy* which is in his presence, and of those everlasting pleasures, and rivers of comfort, which are at his *right hand*. Capable of the heavy *wrath of God*, which is beyond the *fear* or the *fancy* of man to comprehend. As the *goodness of God* exceeds our *faith*, so the *anger of God* exceeds our *fear*.

6. The dignity of the soul appears by the *spiritual enemies* which war against it: Of whom we may say as the Prophet of the *Medes*, *Isai. 13. 17.* that they *regard not silver or gold*, they fight neither against house, nor land, but against the soul onely. Satan, saies as the King of *Sodom* unto *Abraham*, *Gen. 14. 21.* *Give me the souls, and take the goods to thy self.* 7. By the *guard of Angels* which God hath appointed to protect it, and convey it to heaven, *Luke 16. 22.* 8. By the *heavenly Manna*, the *treasts of Consolation*

solation the wells of salvation, the bread of life, the feast of marrow, and fatted things, which the Lord in his Word and Ordinances hath provided to feed it; one sentence and period whereof is more worth in an hour of Temptation, than rocks of Diamonds, or mountains of Gold.
 9. And above all the dignity of the soul appears by the *price* which was laid down to redeem it. *We were not redeemed by silver and gold, but by the blood of God*, 1 Pet. 1. 19. If silver and gold could have *bought* the soul, silver and gold happily might have *blessed* it, but since no price can purchase it, but the *blood* of God, no treasure can enrich it, but the *fruition* of God. *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance*, Psal. 16. 5.

Very many Uses might be made of this most important doctrine: As, 1. To adore the infinite *love* of God towards the *souls* of poor sinfull men, in finding out of his own unsearchable wisdom, an expedient which neither men nor angels could ever have discovered, for the *punishing* of the *sin*, and *saving* of the *soul* that sinned.

2. The infinite *love* of *Christ*, who so loved us, as to *give himself* for us, to make *his soul* an *offering for sin*, that our souls might not be undone by it. A *Son* to die for *servants*, an *holy*, an only and *beloved* son for *rebellious* servants; a Judge for malefactors, to come not only to *save*, but to *seek*, those that sought not, that inquired not after him: as there was *never sorrow* like *his sorrow*, so there was never *love* like *his love*.

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Diog. Laert. in
Thalete.

3. The infinite mercy of God in revealing *Christ* unto us, bringing *life and immortality to light by the Gospel*, and waiting upon us, that he may be gracious unto us. If *Thales* the Philosopher gave thanks that he was born a Grecian, and not a Barbarian, how much more should we bless God, that we are Christians, and not onely Philosophers; that the Lord hath taken care not onely to adorn our souls, but to save them.

4. The infinite sweetness of his powerfull and most efficacious grace, in perswading us to give entertainment unto the mercy thus tendred unto us, who of our selves were ready to *beleeve lying vanities, to forsake our own mercie, and to thrust away salvation from our selves.*

Arist. Ethic.
lib. 6 cap. 7.

5. The great reasonableness and wisdom of true Religion, as being that which promoteth our *supreme interest*, namely, the happiness of the soul. Wisdom is *ἐπιστήμη τῶν τιμιωτάτων*, the knowledge of the most honourable things, and of greatest concernment. He that *winneeth souls is wise*, saith Solomon, Prov. 7. 11, 30. how much more he that *saveth his own* Prov. 9. 12. 1 Tim. 4. 16. A man may be *wise for others*, and a *fool for himself*. Achitophel was a *wise man* when he counselled Absalom, but a *fool* when he *hanged himself*. Judas a *wise man* for others when he *preached Christ*, a *fool* for himself, when he *betrayed him*; no greater folly in the world then for a man to barter away his soul though it were for the world it self.

6. We should therefore all be exhorted, 1. Seriously to study the worth of a *soul*, the *spiritualness*, the *immortality* of it, the *image* of God after which it was both created and renewed, the *glory* reserved for it if it stand, the *wrath* prepared for it if it fall. 2. To walk as men that have *souls*, many walk as if they had nothing but *bellies* to to fill, and *backs* to cloath, *fancies* to be tickled with vanity, *eyes* and *ears* to look after pleasure, *brains* to entertain empty notions, and *tongues* to utter them, but their *souls* serve them to little other purpose, then as *salt* to keep their bodies from stinking: *Socrates* wondred when he observed *Statuaries*, how carefull they were to make stones like men, and men in the mean time by their carelesness, turning themselves into very blocks and stones. 3. To secure the salvation of the *soul*, to take heed of exposing our principal *jewel* unto rapine and miscarriage. *Keep thy heart*, saith *Solomon*, with all diligence, *Prov.* 4. 23. *Give all diligence*, saith *Peter*, to make your calling and election sure, *2 Pet.* 1. 10. that so we may never be without the *comforts* of God to delight our *souls*, *Psal.* 94. 19. that we may be able to say as *David* did, *Return to thy rest O my soul*, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee, *Psal.* 116. 7. 4. To prize the *means* of that *salvation*, and to incourage the *ambassadors* of Christ, as those that watch for your *souls*, and unto whom is committed the *ministry* of *reconciliation*. They study, pray, watch, labour, and sweat for you, *Esteem them highly*

Diogen. Laert.
in Socrat.

in love for their works sake, 1 Thes. 5. 13. It is recorded for the honour of *Hezekiah* that he spake comfortably to all the Levites, who taught the good knowledge of the Lord, 2 Chron. 30. 22. And of *Nehemiah*, That he took care of the Offices of Gods House, Nehem. 13. 10. 14. Of the good *Shunamite*, that she provided for the Prophet, 2 Reg. 4. 8, 10. And of the *Galatians*, That they received Paul as an Angel of God, and would if possible have plucked out their eyes to have done him good, Gal. 4. 14, 15. And though you do these things (and your honour it is that you do it in an age wherein God hath suffered seduced souls to pour contempt upon the Ministers of the Gospel, and as madmen to fight with the Physicians that heal them) yet give me leave to stir you up by putting you in remembrance. 5. To resist the enemies that withstand this salvation, fleshly lusts, worldly snares, Satanical temptations, which war against the soul. 6. To pity the souls of other men, to promote in our several stations and employments, the interest of mens souls, to save them with violence, to snatch them out of the fire, to disquiet wicked men in their sins, to encourage good men in their wayes, to our uttermost power every where to promote the grace of God which bringeth salvation to the souls of men. Lastly, To be wise merchants for our own souls. Our Saviour telleth us, That the Kingdom of heaven is like a merchant man seeking goodly pearls, Matth. 13. 45. And as else.

elsewhere th: *Virgins* are distinguished into *wise*, and *foolish*: So may we distinguish those *Merchants* who trade heavenward. For as he said, *Mala emptio exprobrat stultitiam*: It is a note of folly to make an ill bargain.

Plin. Epist.

Now there are severall things wherein the wisdom of a Merchant doth shew it self:

1. He considers *where* the best and *most* sure commodities are, where he is certain to make a good return, as it is noted of *Solomon*, 1 Reg. 10. 11. 22, 28. and of *Tyrus*, Ezek. 27. So our *Christian merchant* knowing that the best commodities come from *heaven*, hath his thoughts and affections most there. And as those that trade to *China*, though they cannot travell far up into the Country are admitted to some skirts and maritime Harbours to receive the commodities of the Country; so our Merchant though he cannot go to *heaven* it self, yet he hath access, as it were, to the *out-borders* of heaven, the *Word* and *Ordinances* called frequently in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* τὰ ἐπὶ οὐρανόθεν, *Heavenly things*. Here then they watch at the gates of wisdomes house, here they search, dig, hide, and lay up, that the Word may dwell in them richly, and that they may be rich in knowledge, Prov. 8. 34. Col. 3. 16. 1 Cor. 1. 5.

2. A wise merchant considers where is the *easiest* purchase of those commodities. It is true, *heavenly things* are in their own nature the *most* precious, and do indeed cost the most excellent price. The *Redemption of a soul* is precious,

Psal.

Pfal. 49. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 19. yet because this precious price was none of ours, we are said to be *saved freely*, *Eph. 2. 8. to buy milk and wine without money, and without price, Isai. 55. 1.* for though we must sell all for this Jewel, if not actually, yet in *preparatione animæ*, yet it is all of no *reall* or *valuable* estimation in such a bargain, but like the *glasse beads*, and such like trifles which we give unto *Indians* for their *silver and gold*; like the *sweeping out of dust* and *rags out of an house* when it is to be inhabited; Christ will not take possession of the soul, till vile lusts, and worthless affections are purged out, not by way of *purchase* of him, but by way of *preparation* for him. And this is one of the easiest purchases in the world, to let go *dirt*, *σκύβαλα περικαθαρίματα*, and to receive *gold*.

3. A wise *merchant*, though he will make his purchase as easie as he can, will yet in a rare commodity *bid home*, and not stick at a small difference; and so doth a wise Christian, knowing the *unsearchable riches of Christ*, never sticks at any *abatement*. Many men bid much, proceed far, *Herod doth many things*; *Agrippa is almost a Christian*, hypocrites will part with *thousands of rams, rivers of oil, their first-born*, *Mic. 6. 7.* but when the childe comes to the very birth, they *stay in the place of the breaking forth of children* *Hos. 13. 13.* when it comes to this issue, they must shake hands for ever with their darling and beloved lust, *Herod with Herodias*, the *yong man* with his worldly love, the *Jew* with his legal righteousness,

oufulness, the Greek with his carnal wisdom; nay, saith the hypocrite be the jewel never so rich, I resolve to keep this *green glasse*, or this *wooden platter*, something of mine own; here Christ and the soul part, and they who came running unto him, go away *sorrowing* from him; whereas wise Christians *consult not with flesh and blood*, but go through with the bargain: Let me have Christ though I have nothing but him.

4. A wise Merchant doth husband time and opportunity for his best advantage, takes the right season for his voyage and commodity; that he may return with the more speed and profit. As it is observed of the Philosopher, that foreseeing a plentiful year of Olives, he rented many Olive-yards, and by that demonstrated that a learned man, if he would aim at worldly gain, could easily be a rich man too. It is noted as an excellent part of wisdom to know and to manage time, *Cujus unius avaritia honesta est*, as Seneca speaks, *Esther 1. 13* *1 Chron. 12. 32.* *Eph. 5. 15, 17.* The Rabbi said, *Nemo est cui non sit hora sua*, every man hath his hour; he who overslips that season, may never meet with the like again, *If thou hadst known in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace*, *Luke 19. 42.* The Scripture insists much upon a day of grace, and calls upon us to work, before the night come, *2 Cor 6. 2.* *Hebr. 3. 15.* *Ioh. 12. 35.* The Lord reckons the times which pass over us, and puts them upon our account. *These three years I come, seeking fruit, and finde none*, *Luk. 13. 7.*

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I gave her *space to repent*, and she repented not, Rev. 2. 21, 22. *from the 13. year, to the 25. year*, I have spoken unto you, saith the Prophet, Jer. 25. 3. therefore we should learn to improve them, and with the impotent persons at the pool of *Bethesda*, to step in when the *Angel stirs* the water. Now the Church is *afflicted*, it is a season of *prayer*, and learning, *hear the rod*, learn righteousness, Mic. 6. 9. *Isai. 26. 8, 9. Psal. 94. 12.* Now the Church is *enlarged*, it is a season of *praise*, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoyce and be glad therein*, Psal. 118. 24. I am now at an *Ordinance*, I will hear what God will say: now in the *company* of a *learned* and *wise* man, I will draw some knowledge and counsel from him: I am under *temptation*, now is a fit time to *lean on the Name of the Lord*, *Isai. 50. 10.* I am in place of *dignity* and *power*, Let me consider what it is that God requireth of me *in such a time as this*, *Esth. 4. 14.* As the *tree of life* bringeth fruit *every moneth*, Rev. 22. 2. so a wise Christian, as a wise husbandman, hath his distinct employments for *every moneth*, bringeth forth his fruit in *its season* Psal. 1. 3.

5. In a great City one *merchant* having one commodity, and another another, they do *mutually interchange* them for the enriching of one another: So in the City of God, one hath the spirit of *wisdom*, another of *knowledge*, one excellent at opening *scripture*, another at *staring questions*, another at resolving *cases*, another at exhortation, and Christian *conference*, and

and wise Christians should improve all advantages of this kinde unto their mutual enrichment.

6. A wise *merchant* hath constant *intelligence* and *returns* to and from the Country where his trade lies, is not without a *factor* there, to manage his affairs; so should the *christian merchant*, his trade is in heaven, *Phil. 3: 20.* thither should he continually send, and return the commodities of that kingdome. The *Lord Jesus* is the *Agent* of his Church there, to transact their affairs for them; we should keep constant intelligence with him, pour out our desires into his bosome, and wait for the answer which he will send. *Prayer* and *praises* are the *Vessels* in which we send to heaven: *faith, meditation, study* of the Scriptures, attendance on the *Ministry*, vessels by which we hear from heaven, *He shal receive of mine*, saith our Saviour of the holy Spirit, *and shall shew it unto you, Joh. 16. 14.* This intercourse we must keep continually open and unobstructed, that Christ may daily hear from us, and we daily receive from him, that so we may be filled with all the fulness of God, and may have all the storehouses of the soul replenished from heaven, with all abundance of necessary graces & comforts.

7. A wise *merchant* doth provide for *losses*, and yet though he venture much, will *assure* the main; so should we resolve before hand upon many troubles in the way to heaven, sit down and *consider* the cost of our holy profession, *Luke 14. 26, 28.* the ship wherein Christ is, is not secured from a *storm*. His crown of *thorns*, went before his crown of *glory*, and so must ours; there is a *sea* and a *wilderness* between *Egypt* and *Canaan*, through many

tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. But this is our comfort, That there is an *assurance-office*, wherein all our losses will be repaired an hundred fold, and that upon Gods own security, whereof we have a record, *Mark 10. 29, 30.* Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospels; but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this life; houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecution, (as comforts, supports, encouragements in the midst of his persecutions) and in the world to come eternal life. There is no aged Christian but will love us in such a case with the love of a father, no young Christian but will reverence us with the love of a son, no fellow Christian but will tender us with the love of a brother, every good mans house, and heart shall be open unto us. *Whosoever doth the will of God, will be our brother, and sister, and mother*, as our Saviour speaks, *Matth. 12. 50.*

8. The wisest Merchants must live by faith, and deal much in credit, waiting long for a good return out of remote Countries; as the Husbandman *ploweth in hope*, and *soweth in tears*, *1 Cor. 9. 10. Psal. 126. 5.* having Gods promise that there shall be *harvest*, *Gen. 8. 22.* So the Merchant trafficketh in hope to enjoy that which the Prophet calls the *Harvest of the River*, *Isai. 23. 3.* Such is the life of a true Christian, he doth not estimate his wealth, by the things in his own possession, but lives by faith, reckons upon a great stock going in another country, is richer in obligations and promises,

mises, then he is in present *graces*. There is a *mutuall trust* between God and him. 1. He takes upon *trust*; receives from God many *talents* of time, health, wealth, power, wisdom, learning, grace, precepts, and improves them to his Masters service, *Matth. 25. 16, 17. 1 Tim. 6. 20.* 2. He gives upon *Trust*, lends to the Lord, *Prov. 19. 17.* dedicates his merchandise to the Lord, *Isai. 23. 18.* Trusts God with his *Name* and *Innocency*, as *Joseph* did, as *Christ* did, *1 Pet. 2. 23.* with his *life*, and interests, as *David* did, *Psal. 31. 3. 15. 1 Sam. 30. 6.* with his children, as *Jacob* did, *Gen. 43. 13, 14* with his *soul*, as *Paul* did, *2 Tim. 1. 12.* He is not anxiously solicitous how to escape this *danger*; how to repair this *losse*; how to advance this *gain*; how to recover the *hundred Talents*; he knows that God is a *Father* full of *love*, an heavenly *Father* full of *power*, an *omniscient Father* full of *providence*; if his *eye* see our wants, and his *heart* pitty them, and his treasures abound towards them, how can his *hand* forbear to supply them?

Lastly, a wise Merchant is very exact in his Books of *account*, preserving a distinct knowledge of his gains and losses; his improvements, or decays. Such is the care of a wise Christian, to acquaint himself with his spiritual estate, to make his *calling* and *election* sure, *2 Pet. 1. 10* to prove whether he be in the *faith*, *2 Cor. 13. 5.* to examine how his soul *prosper*s, to preserve his peace of Conscience, and interest in the love of God. He shall never have overmuch work to do, who is daily doing something. There is something in it that the *Laver*

of Bras, is said to have been made of looking glasse; *Exod. 38.8.* seeing of our faces, and acquaintance with our estates, is a good preparation to the cleansing of our selves. *I thought on my ways, and turned,* saith David, *Psal. 119.59.* Let us search and try our wayes and turn to the Lord our God, saith the Church, *Lam. 3. 40.*

To conclude all, The life of a merchant in order unto gain, stands in these four things. In *wisdome*, and forecast to contrive; in *labour*, to transact business; in *patience*, to wait; and in *thriftiness* to preserve, what his labours gain: So our Christian Merchant labours, 1. For that *wisdome* which is unto salvation, *2 Tim. 3.15.* which is the foundation of all duties, *Col. 1.9,10.* considers the field wherein the treasure is, and buyes it, *Prov. 31. 16.* 2. He prosecutes the dictates of spiritual wisdome, with a *work of faith*, and *labour of love*. It is not empty willings, and velleities, yawning & drowsie desires that can make a merchant or a christian rich; much pain must be taken with an evill heart, with a sluggish spirit, with a stubborn will, with impotent passions, with strong lusts, with active enemies. 3. He endures with *patience*, gives not over the trade of Piety, if his expectations be not presently answered, but by *patient continuance in well doing*, comes to glory and honour at the last, *Rom. 2.7.* *Heb. 10 37* 4. He hides the word in his heart, *stores up* precepts, promises, examples, experiments; what with wisdome, labour, and patience he hath gotten, he doth with all care and diligence *preserve*, that he may go forward, and not backward, in his holy Profession.

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